

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 IO-13 DPW-01 AID-20 RSR-01 /143 W

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R 271125Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5234

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

USDEL JEC PARIS UNN

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13609

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: AN QUANG SPOKESMAN DENIES EXPATRIATE VENERABLE THIEN
CHAU SPEAKS FOR THE BUDDHIST CHURCH

REF: A) SAIGON 2409

B) SAIGON A-121, JUNE 26, 1973

1. ACCORDING TO AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE JULY 26 EDITION
OF RESPECTED, INDEPENDENT SAIGON DAILY CHINH LUAN, ON JULY 26
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ANO QUANG HIGH SECULAR COUNCIL
VENERABLE HUYEN QUANG ISSUED A STATEMENT AS FOLLOWS:
"VENERABLE THIEN CHAU DOES NOT REPRESENT THE BUDDHIST
CONGREGATION, THEREFORE WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS
ACTIVITIES IN THE FRENCH CAPITAL." THE ARTICLE NOTES THIEN CHAU'S
RECENT ASSOCIATION WITH "THIRD FORCE" ELEMENTS IN PARIS,
SPECIFICALLY WITH THE NEWLY-FORMED "COMMITTEE FOR PEACE AND DEM-
OCRATIC LIBERTIES IN SVN (CPDLSVN), AND ASSERTS THAT THE AN QUANG
LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN "UNAWARE" OF THOSE ACTIVITIES AND DISA-
PPROVES OF THEM.

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2. COMMENT: THIEN CHAU HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN INVOLVED IN RECENT YEARS IN A CONTEST WITH ANOTHER EXPATRIATE BONZE, NHAT HANH, FOR CONTROL OVER THE OVERSEAS BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION IN PARIS AND FOR RECOGNITION AS AN QUANG'S "OFFICIAL" SPOKESMAN AMONG THE VIETNAMESE EMIGRE COMMUNITY THERE. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS AN QUANG SPOKESMAN HAVE DISAVOWED THIEN CHAU WHOM THEY REGARD AS MORE "RADICAL" THAN HIS RIVAL NHAT HANH AND AS UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE TO THE COMMUNISTS. THAT AN QUANG HAS DONE SO AGAIN IS AN INDICATION THAT THE RELATIVELY MODERATE LEADERSHIP OF AN QUANG, WHICH RECENTLY HAS BEEN UNDER SOME PRESSURE FROM MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS, RETAINS CONTROL OVER THE CHURCH APPARATUS IN SAIGON. MARTIN

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Message Attributes

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30 JUN 2005

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